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PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE

Recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution and Migration

Report of the Secretary-General of the Conference

SUMMARY

In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/93, the Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution and Migration was convened in Santa Cruz, Bolivia from 18 to 22 January 1993, as part of the substantive preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development to be held in 1994. This report presents the findings of the Expert Group for consideration by the Preparatory Committee for the Conference in the context of the review and appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action. The Group appraised current trends in population distribution and migration and their interrelations with development. It concluded that migration was a rational response on the part of individuals and families to interregional differences in opportunities. Urbanization was viewed as an intrinsic part of development and recommendations were made to increase Governments' capacity to manage urban development and respond to the needs of urban dwellers, especially the poor. Measures to increase rural productivity and improve the linkages between rural and urban areas were also proposed. With regard to international migration, the processes leading to increasing migration pressures were reviewed and suggestions were made about how to reduce them. The need to protect the rights of migrants was underscored, particularly with respect to the right of asylum. The international community was urged to adopt appropriate strategies to protect and assist refugees.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1991/93 of 26 July 1991, decided to convene an International Conference on Population and Development in 1994. Pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General of the Conference convened the Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution and Migration in Santa Cruz, Bolivia from 18 to 22 January 1993. The participants included 16 experts serving in their personal capacities, representatives of the five regional commissions and of several United Nations agencies and representatives of other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. As a basis for discussion, the 16 experts had prepared papers on the main agenda items in order to provide a framework for discussion. Opening statements were made by the Minister of Planning of the Government of Bolivia, the Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference, the Director of the Centro Iberoamericano de Formación para el Desarrollo and the Vice-President of Bolivia.

2. All the speakers emphasized the importance of migration in the modern world and particularly its contribution to urbanization. The Secretary-General of the Conference noted that urbanization was an integral part of the development process. Rural-to-urban migration was only one of the forms of internal migration related to development. Rural-to-rural movements were sizeable in many countries and their interrelations with the environment were of growing importance, particularly where resettlement in frontier areas rich in biodiversity was involved.

3. With respect to international migration, the Secretary-General of the Conference remarked that, historically, it had generally been perceived as a positive process enabling the development of many of today's industrialized countries and opening new possibilities for millions of people. International migration was characterized as a sensitive political issue whose discussion was often hampered by the lack of information on both the size and nature of migration flows. Despite the concerns raised by South-to-North migration, most international migrants found themselves in the developing world. The increasing participation of women in international migration and the need to ensure that they were protected against abuse were underscored. Given the increasing pool of potential migrants and the forces leading to globalization, migration pressures were judged to be on the increase. Trade liberalization, especially in agricultural products and products with a high labour content, was cited as a more effective means of reducing those pressures than current levels of international assistance for developing countries.

4. The Secretary-General of the Conference concluded by underscoring the need to collect, analyse and exchange data on all types of international migration. She recognized migration as a major issue for the 1990s and stressed the need to establish how migrants and their families could best contribute to development.

I. SUMMARY OF THE PAPERS AND DISCUSSION

A. Overview of the main issues

5. The presentation of the paper entitled "Population distribution and migration: the emerging issues", prepared by the Population Division, highlighted the huge scale of internal and international migration. For the world as a whole, net internal migration of all types (urban-to-rural, rural-to-urban, rural-to-rural and urban-to-urban) was estimated to have involved between 750 million and 1 billion persons during the period 1975-1985. Although rural-to-urban migration continued to be the focus of most research and policy concern, rural-to-rural flows were significantly higher in countries that were still mostly rural and urban-to-urban migration was the dominant form in highly urbanized countries. International migration, although involving a smaller number of persons, was also significant. Census data, referring mostly to the 1970s and early 1980s, indicated that some 77 million persons were enumerated outside their country of birth or citizenship, a figure that represented a lower bound for the stock of international migrants world wide.

6. It was noted that the strategy of moving capital to labour had not been entirely successful in stemming migration pressures. Thus, several of the Asian newly industrializing economies had experienced significant migrant outflows as they pursued export-led economic development. Their experience had confirmed that the nature of the development process was destabilizing and that it was likely to increase migration pressures in the short to medium term.

7. Changes in the nature and configuration of States were also identified as having important implications for migration. The drive towards greater unification among the member States of the European Community was contrasted with the disintegration of States occurring among former Eastern-bloc countries. Such changes were blurring the distinction between internal and international migration: citizens of member States of the European Community had gained greater freedom of movement and establishment within the Community, whereas Russians in the non-Russian successor States of the Soviet Union had become international migrants.

8. With respect to migrants' rights, mention was made of the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 1990. 1/ The Convention had extended basic human rights to all migrant workers, irrespective of their legal status, and had provided that documented migrant workers and members of their families enjoy equality of treatment with nationals of the States of employment in a number of legal, economic, social and cultural areas.

9. The discussion stressed the need to consider different types of migration separately. With respect to the category of "environmental refugees", caution was urged in the use of the term, since in most instances environmental factors were only one of a host of causes leading to migration. Moreover, many of the migrants thus labelled were not even outside of their country of nationality and could not therefore be considered refugees. Since the definition of refugee contained in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees 2/ had not included environmental factors, the Office of the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had no mandate for the protection of "environmental refugees".

10. Participants noted that, in contrast to previous assessments, migration was increasingly recognized as a logical strategy of individuals seeking to enhance their opportunities or assure their survival. Economic growth entailed both urbanization and the movement of labour. Although in many countries Governments were reducing their planning role, they nevertheless had to meet the needs and priorities of people and enterprises in the locations where they chose to establish themselves. Lastly, although economic disparities were acknowledged as one of the major determinants of migration, the importance of growing demographic imbalances was also underscored.

B. Patterns of population distribution and development

11. The presentation of the paper entitled "Global urbanization: towards the twenty-first century" stressed that the process of urbanization was an intrinsic part of economic development. In comparing the experience of developed and developing countries, the difference in the magnitude of the urbanization process was highlighted. Thus, whereas the urban areas of developed countries had absorbed about 100 million persons during the period 1815-1915, urban areas in developing countries were expected to accommodate about 1.5 billion additional persons during the period 1990-2010. In addition, while developed countries had generally had the means to build adequate infrastructure while urbanizing, most developing countries, particularly those in Africa and Asia, had serious unmet infrastructure needs. Two aspects of globalization were having important impacts on urbanization: the transactional revolution, involving more efficient flows of information and capital, and the new division of labour associated with the free movement of capital to maximize accumulation. Those processes had led to a greater centralization of the urban system and the emergence of transaction nodes facilitating the movement of people, information, capital and commodities. Successful nodes were often mega-urban regions that had carved a niche in the global market by providing certain goods and services.

12. Despite these important changes, policy was still coloured by a nineteenth century anti-urban perspective and was often geared to controlling the growth of large cities. Evidence to the contrary notwithstanding, it was widely assumed that the spatial separation of urban and rural activities would persist. There was a need to take account of the diverging urbanization patterns that the uneven incorporation of developing countries into the world economic system had brought about.

13. The discussion underscored that, in many countries, the economic and social differences between urban and rural areas were becoming less marked. A revision of the definitions of rural and urban areas seemed necessary if the needs of planners were to be met. There was a need to identify functional regions, especially in the light of the increasing significance of rural-urban interactions. Some participants suggested that the sheer size of cities involved diseconomies, while others argued that the existence of such diseconomies had not been proven. The issue was further stated as: diseconomies for whom? While private capital benefited from economies of scale in large urban centres, the poor often had to bear the diseconomies associated with crowded housing, health hazards and lack of infrastructure. Furthermore,

in most developing countries the informal sector was absorbing increasing numbers of urban workers, particularly women.

14. The consideration of population distribution patterns in specific world regions followed. The presentation of the paper entitled "Population distribution patterns in developed countries" noted that the increasing concentration of the urban population in large urban centres had been considered a normal concomitant of urbanization until data for the 1960s showed that in several developed countries larger metropolitan areas had lost population, in relative terms, to smaller urban centres. That phenomenon, known as counter-urbanization, had been formally defined by Fielding as the existence of a negative relationship between size of place and rate of population growth. The evidence showed that counter-urbanization had been fairly widespread in the developed world during the 1960s and 1970s but that the trend had changed in key countries during the 1980s. Thus, in the United States of America large metropolitan areas had again grown more rapidly during the 1980s than had non-metropolitan areas. Five sets of factors were said to explain the rise and fall of counter-urbanization since the 1960s.

15. The discussion centred on a few factors judged to be essential in assessing the possible evolution of population distribution in developed countries. Shifts in the age structure stemming from sustained low population growth could have important implications for population distribution if different birth cohorts had different residential preferences. The impact of Governments' non-spatial policies and sectoral priorities were considered to have greater influence on population distribution than their explicit spatial or territorial policies. The need to adopt more precise definitions for the study of population distribution in developed countries was stressed. The use of functional urban regions seemed necessary but it demanded suitable databases and concepts that facilitated international comparisons.

16. The Expert Group proceeded to consider population distribution issues relative to the main developing regions. The presentation of the paper entitled "Population distribution patterns and development in Africa" noted the diversity characterizing the continent in terms of population distribution, changes over time and the factors influencing internal migration. Although Africa was the least urbanized region of the developing world, most African countries were undergoing rapid urbanization. The high fertility characterizing African countries made major contributions to the growth of urban areas and rural-to-urban migration continued to be significant. African Governments were faced with the need to develop comprehensive population distribution policies. The quality of urban management had to be improved and an effective partnership had to be developed between central and local Governments. It was urgent to devise methods to provide low-cost urban services and ways of recovering investment costs so that services could be expanded, although it was recognized that subsidies might be needed to ensure that the poorest groups had access to needed services. Given the importance of the rural sector in African countries, the development of economic and institutional linkages between rural and urban areas was needed to foster synergistic interactions between rural and urban development in the region.

17. The presentation of the paper entitled "Population distribution policies and development in Asia" noted that Asia's level of urbanization was still low but that the region's average concealed large variations between countries.

Asia contained the most populous countries in the world and a number of much smaller countries characterized by great economic dynamism. The countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), in particular, were likely to maintain a rapid rate of urbanization in conjunction with sustained economic growth. In the most populous countries, high rural population densities and changes in agricultural production had the potential of fuelling rapid urbanization and posed enormous challenges for the achievement of sustainable development.

18. In Asian countries, as in other countries of the developing world, population and economic activity tended to be concentrated in one or a few large cities. However, the concentration of the urban population in a single city was less marked in the most populous countries of the region - China, India and Indonesia - and in countries that had pursued active rural development policies, such as Malaysia and Sri Lanka. In addition, in a number of countries the proportion of the urban population in the primate city had been declining. The growth rates of several Asian mega-cities had also declined somewhat, partly because of the redistribution of production and population outside the metropolitan area's boundaries to areas that were still functionally linked to the city. In a sense, therefore, the slow-down recorded was artificial. The diseconomies of scale in some mega-cities had encouraged investment to seek new locations.

19. The presentation of the paper entitled "Population distribution and development in Latin America" noted that Latin America was the most urbanized region of the developing world, having experienced rapid urbanization during the twentieth century that had led to the concentration of both people and economic activities in a few large cities. During the period 1925-1975, the total population of the region had tripled, while the urban population had increased eightfold. In the 1990s, the number of people living in poverty in urban areas had surpassed that in rural areas. As in other developing regions, there was considerable diversity in the population distribution of the various Latin American countries, arising from historical and structural differences. With regard to primacy and the growth of the largest cities within each country, over half of the countries of the region were expected to show some reversal of population concentration in the largest cities. Recent evidence indicated that the primacy of Buenos Aires was declining and that, during the 1980s, Mexico's three largest cities had experienced lower growth rates than expected. Such trends were probably related to the economic changes experienced by the region, as structural adjustment led to lower industrialization, the casualization of employment and a reduction of the attractiveness of large cities for migrants. Such structural changes had also given rise to new forms of territorial mobility, particularly those of a temporary nature, which did not necessarily lead to population redistribution in the traditional sense.

20. The discussion stressed that urbanization was an inevitable part of development and, consequently, that it was futile for Governments to insist on stopping rural-to-urban migration. Nevertheless, it was recognized that Governments could reduce pressures for rural out-migration by promoting the use of labour-intensive technologies and by raising the prices of agricultural products.

21. It was emphasized that there was a need to integrate population distribution policies, including urbanization policies, into national

development strategies. In so doing, it was important to keep in mind that rural and urban development were two sides of the same coin. Strategies that emphasized one at the expense of the other were doomed to failure. Measures to strengthen urban-rural economic interactions and to improve rural infrastructure so as to increase productivity were considered desirable.

22. Participants stressed the need for Governments of developing countries to strengthen the capacity, competence and accountability of city and municipal authorities. It was judged that a key task of Governments was to address the social and economic needs of their populations, whether in rural or urban areas. It was particularly important to work towards the alleviation of poverty, which was growing in both rural areas and cities. Given the potential for rapid urbanization, especially in regions where the rural population was still growing rapidly, there was an urgent need to improve urban infrastructure and to provide access to services for all population subgroups, particularly the poor. To gain control of urban growth, particularly in regions where general population growth was high, attention had to be paid to policies aimed at reducing natural increase.

23. In ascertaining the impact of development on population distribution, note was taken of how its effects might change over time. In Latin America, for example, when economic growth was based on import substitution, industrialization had been the engine of growth of most large cities. With the adoption of export-oriented policies in the 1970s and 1980s, the centres of economic activity had changed and population growth had accelerated in urban centres located near ports, borders or export-producing sites (mining centres, for instance).

24. In a number of countries, internal strife had led to increased migration. Although that migration often took the form of rural-to-rural movements, forced migration between urban areas and from rural to urban areas was also common. The population that was thus internally displaced was often in need of protection and assistance, but there was no internationally established mechanism to provide such protection. A related problem was the capacity of war-torn countries to ensure the safety of repatriating refugees, and provide them with adequate infrastructure and services. Repatriation was likely to be successful only if assistance could be provided to reintegrate refugees in their areas of origin.

C. Policies affecting internal migration and population distribution

25. The presentation of the paper entitled "The social and environmental problems associated with rapid urbanization" highlighted four issues: the main environmental problems and their causes; who was most vulnerable to them; the extent to which migrants as compared to non-migrants were vulnerable; and the key policy issues involved in addressing environmental problems. The large scale and wide range of environmental problems evident in the cities of developing countries were reviewed in conjunction with their serious health impacts. Biological pathogens (mainly excreta-related, insect-borne, airborne or food-borne) and the lack of access to safe and sufficient water were generally the most serious threats to health, although exposure to chemical pollutants and physical hazards because of housing deficiencies also contributed significantly to psychosocial disorders in many cities.

26. Migrants were not necessarily the group most vulnerable to such hazards, since vulnerability was influenced, among other things, by age, health status, socially determined roles and lack of means to avoid a certain hazard or to cope with the impact of illness or injury. In most cities, the single most important factor determining vulnerability was income, although certain age and occupational groups among the low-income population were especially vulnerable. Because of gender differentiation regarding work undertaken, access to services, income sources and access to shelter, women were particularly vulnerable to certain environmental hazards.

27. Participants noted that the underlying cause of most of the problems mentioned was not so much rapid urbanization itself but the incapacity of Governments to cope with the rapid economic, social and demographic changes that accompanied such urbanization. In addition, poorer groups in cities, including poor migrants, often bore a disproportionate share of the costs of environmental problems.

28. Under certain circumstances, migrant groups could be particularly vulnerable. For example, migrants were especially susceptible to diseases that were endemic in the area of destination to which they had not been exposed in the area of origin. To the extent that certain types of migrants were more likely to join the ranks of the urban poor than others, they were also particularly vulnerable to the health hazards posed by environmental problems. Nevertheless, the main policy issue was considered to be the reduction of poverty and the vulnerability of all urban dwellers to environmental hazards, whether they were migrants or not.

29. Several measures for improving the plight of the urban poor were suggested, including facilitating their access to credit, providing them with technical assistance to improve their housing and promoting the creation of partnerships between neighbourhood groups and non-governmental organizations so that strategies to gain access to water, sanitation or garbage collection could be devised collectively. Such measures had a greater probability of being successful if local or municipal governments were strengthened by being allowed to collect taxes, granted greater responsibility for the welfare of local communities and at the same time made accountable to the governed.

30. The presentation of the paper entitled "Population distribution policies and their impact on development" contrasted the spatial implications of two of the most common development strategies. The first was that adopted by many developing countries between 1930 and the early 1970s. Based on Keynesian theories of economic development, that strategy had involved substantial State intervention to promote industrialization for import substitution and to direct population redistribution. Such a strategy, termed "peripheral Fordism", had been widely applied throughout Latin America, where it had led to unbalanced capital accumulation, which in turn had given rise to unbalanced population distribution by reinforcing the primacy of the largest cities, among other things. To combat the inequitable effects of capital accumulation, Governments had adopted territorial policies that had sought to promote growth in peripheral regions but had rarely had much impact, partly because they had seldom been accorded priority.

31. The second strategy, which had already been widely implemented in developing countries by 1990, had greatly reduced the role of the State and had

ascribed a larger role to market forces for both production and population redistribution. Economically, it had involved an outward orientation, with priority given to exports. While, in the previous strategy, the combination of State support and national capital had been seen as the main source of productive investment, in the new strategy, international investment had been sought and encouraged. The State, with a reduced role, had concentrated its efforts on maintaining fiscal austerity and balanced budgets. The key goal had been the competitive incorporation of countries into the new international division of labour. The new strategy had had important spatial implications, since, within each national economy, rapid urbanization had tended to occur in those locations that had served as growth poles with respect to production, the transport of goods for export and associated services. Concomitantly, the centres where import substitution industries had been concentrated had sometimes declined in importance.

32. Participants noted the contradiction inherent in the adoption of the new strategy by Governments that also claimed to have ambitious goals regarding spatial distribution policies. The more economies became export-oriented, the greater the influence of global forces on the spatial distribution of production and, consequently, on the spatial distribution of population.

D. Internal migration and its implications for development

33. The presentation of the paper entitled "Migration as a survival strategy: the family dimensions of migration" noted that, despite the deficiencies of available information on migration, both internal and international, the evidence pointed to the fact that migration had increased considerably in both scale and complexity during the 1980s. Movement away from the place of origin, either of a permanent or a temporary nature, had become an option to improve the life chances of a wider spectrum of the population of developing countries. The changing economic, social and political context of developing countries had contributed to the increase in the scale of population mobility. However, to understand the evolution of mobility, it was important to supplement macrolevel explanations with an understanding of how microlevel processes were determining who migrated and how. There was growing evidence that migration resulted from decisions made by families rather than individuals and that migration was often a family strategy to ensure survival and minimize risks. Through migration, a family could diversify its sources of income, in terms of both location and type of work.

34. Studying the role of families and kin groups in the migration process was important for understanding how migration networks developed. Networks facilitating migration involved not only family members and kin but also a variety of agents, recruiters, lawyers or other middlemen, who actively encouraged and sustained migration. Networks were thus becoming increasingly institutionalized and commercialized and were able to sustain population flows even when the economic conditions giving rise to them had changed.

35. The discussion underscored the need to gather better data and develop methods which would permit a more accurate assessment of the scale of population mobility and its growing complexity. More attention had to be devoted to the social and economic dimensions of migration, including those at the family level

and those shaping migration networks. Because of the lack of appropriate information, the extent of temporary migration and its implications for development could not be established with certainty. Temporary movements were said to be more common than those leading to permanent relocation but it was recognized that what started as temporary might become permanent.

E. Economic aspects of international migration

36. The presentation of the paper entitled "Growing economic interdependence and its implications for international migration" noted that in the past four decades increased volumes of international trade and investment had generally not proven to be substitutes for the movement of labour. In a world characterized by growing interdependence, there were competing tendencies towards globalization and regionalization, both of which impinged on migration pressures. Growing economic interdependence among States fostered and was fostered by international migration, but migration was both an opportunity and a source of vulnerability for the interdependent States. In cases where barriers had been raised against economic integration or where poor countries had been involuntarily delinked from the more advanced countries, unauthorized migration had been an increasingly significant form of adjustment.

37. Two main explanations were offered for the fundamental paradox that the economic integration of countries would initially increase rather than reduce migration pressures. First, modalities of socio-economic development associated with rising interdependence among countries were essentially disruptive and dislocating, often leading to considerable internal movements and in some instances precipitating increases in international migration. Second, international trade and foreign investment created bridges between trading and investing partners that activated the flows of labour, both legal and illegal. Once activitated, networks based on family, community or employment relations would sustain migration flows.

38. The implications of economic interdependence for international migration had to be examined within a dynamic systems framework which took into account that migration movements had been initiated and sustained by various dynamic processes, including trade, foreign direct investment, foreign aid and flows of technology, the direction and extent of which were determined within a global framework of historical, cultural, economic and political ties.

39. In discussing the economic aspects of migration, it was important to distinguish between short-term and long-term effects. Thus, it was possible for increased trade and foreign direct investment not to influence migration pressures in the short term but to have a strong influence in reducing them in the long term. Increasingly, trade liberalization was being seen as a means of fostering development and thus of contributing, in the long term, to a reduction in migration. It was noted that trade liberalization, per se, did not guarantee that all developing countries would participate equitably in the world economy. Delinking would continue to occur, with some countries remaining relatively marginalized. Migration pressures were, consequently, unlikely to disappear, even if complete trade liberalization were achieved. A complex set of strategies was needed if migration flows were to be reduced significantly.

40. Participants underscored the importance of taking account of political issues when discussing the economic aspects of migration, since there were often tensions between the economic and political interests of States. Attempts to convert human beings into labour that could be exchanged with minimal social consequences had largely failed.

F. International migration in a changing world

41. The presentation of the paper entitled "The integration and disintegration of nation States and their implications for migration" noted that, historically, national boundaries had been temporary and that border changes had often resulted from armed conflict and entailed population movements. Situations in which forced population movements were likely to arise generally involved groups such as: (a) colonizing populations stranded as minorities in new States; (b) trading or administrative intermediaries in new States; and (c) the classical "national minorities" in new States. Russians in the Baltic States and the newly independent States of Central Asia would belong to the first category, but their forced resettlement, although potential, had hardly begun. A review of other cases where population "unmixing" had occurred indicated that it had traditionally been approved by the international community. In some instances, the forceful relocation of population groups might be inevitable; the issue was whether it could happen without violence.

42. At the other end of the spectrum, the movement of several groups of countries towards integration, particularly economic integration, raised the issue of the relativization of the State. Thus, the economic integration being pursued by the European Community implied that the State would lose control over certain key economic and social matters. Interestingly, the question of controlling population flows had emerged as an important obstacle to the further political and economic integration of the Community. The discussion noted that the disintegration of States could lead to the emergence of new minorities as the basis for demographic accounting changed.

43. The presentation of the paper entitled "The process of integration of migrant communities" noted that integration was the general term used to refer to the process by which migrants became incorporated into the host society. Four types of migrant incorporation were distinguished: assimilation, integration, exclusion and multiculturalism. Assimilation was the one-sided process of adaptation of migrants to the local community by which migrants became indistinguishable from the majority of the population. It was consistent with policies of "benign neglect", whereby the State left matters largely to market forces. Integration involved a process of mutual accommodation between migrants and the host society. It generally involved the removal of barriers to individual participation through equal-opportunities and affirmative-action legislation. Exclusion involved the incorporation of migrants only into selected areas of society. Migrants were denied access to other areas mainly through legal mechanisms. Multiculturalism involved the transformation of immigrant populations into ethnic communities that remained distinguishable from the host population but were granted equal rights in most spheres of life. Both exclusion and multiculturalism led to the creation and maintenance of ethnic communities. Multiculturalism was judged to be the best model for incorporation, although it needed to be adapted to each set of circumstances.

44. Integration was the incorporation model most commonly followed by immigrant-receiving societies and it sometimes included multicultural elements. In the 1980s, more clearly multicultural models had been adopted by Australia, Canada and Sweden. Countries such as Germany or Switzerland still favoured exclusionary models. Government policies and historical factors influenced the relative success of the models followed, but in most receiving countries ethnic group formation was taking place. An important element influencing incorporation and ethnic group formation was the transformation of temporary migrants into long-term or permanent settlers.

45. Cross-national comparisons indicated that in all countries there were major groups that had not yet become integrated. The process of ethnic group formation was largely determined by the actions of the State during the early stages of migration. The best chances for successful integration lay in policies that facilitated permanent settlement, family reunion and access to citizenship. Successful integration depended on active State policies, especially in the areas of housing, employment, education and language training, access to health, and social services. Special measures were needed for female migrants, who were more likely to be isolated and marginalized, and it was essential to adopt and implement legislation to combat all forms of racism and violence against migrants.

46. The discussion recognized that the issues regarding the integration of migrant populations varied from region to region. In Western Asia, the enclave development strategy followed by the oil-rich countries had resulted in the segregation of most migrants, an effort had been made to enforce the rotation of foreign labour and there was no intention to incorporate long-term foreign residents into society. In Israel, the integration of large numbers of Soviet Jews conflicted with the interests of the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza. In Europe, Islam was increasingly seen as a marker for differentiation rather than integration and the trend towards European integration was having largely negative effects on the incorporation prospects of most migrants from outside the region. European Governments argued that the prospects for migrant integration in the region depended on effective border control and the limitation of future migration inflows. In Africa, long-standing refugee populations included a significant number of second- and third-generation refugees but few countries of asylum had taken steps to grant them citizenship.

47. The presentation of the paper entitled "The future of South-to-North migration" noted that migration from developing to developed countries had been increasing and was expected to surpass migration between developed countries in every region, even though, particularly in Europe, migration from former Eastern-bloc countries was still an important component of migration flows. East-to-West migration, however, was expected to abate in the future. Migration from developing countries was already a major component of the flows directed to the main countries of permanent resettlement and even Japan, the archetypal closed society, was experiencing significant inflows of migrants from developing countries. With reference to the report of the United States Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development, 3/ it was argued that the development process led to greater migration pressures, at least in the short to medium term.

48. In Europe, the migration of asylum-seekers constituted an important type of unwanted migration. Their numbers, which had fluctuated considerably during the 1980s, included large proportions of persons from developing countries. The increasing number of both asylum-seekers and undocumented migrants in certain European countries indicated that policies aimed at maintaining a zero net migration balance had failed. However, given the political and economic realities of the world as a whole, such policies were unrealistic. Since migrant inflows could not be totally avoided, making some allowance for them seemed imperative.

49. The discussion noted the difficulties in making assumptions about future South-to-North migration. Although its volume was expected to increase, actual outcomes depended on future labour-market needs in developed countries, the potential for chain-migration through family reunion, the effectiveness of restrictive admission policies in the receiving countries, the occurrence of destabilizing events in developing countries, prospects for economic development in the main countries of origin and the possibility of increasing linkages between the developed world and developing countries that remained marginalized. Differentials in population growth, although clearly affecting the potential for migration, were judged to have relatively weak linkages with actual migration flows. The need to devise strategies that would reduce migration pressures in the developing world was underscored. Cooperation between specific sending and receiving countries was cited as a possibility.

G. International migration between developing countries

50. The presentation of the paper entitled "Migration between Asian countries and its likely future" indicated that migration within the Asian region was predominantly directed to the oil-producing countries of Western Asia and towards Japan and the newly industrializing economies of East and South-East Asia. Data on such movements, however, were rare and often inconsistent. Migration to Western Asia, which had started long before the oil-price hike of the early 1970s, had increased considerably after that and had undergone a shift in composition from Arab to Asian sources. In addition, Asian sources had been further diversified during the late 1970s to include increasing numbers of workers from East and South-East Asia, as opposed to those originating in Southern Asia. During the 1980s, growing labour-force needs associated with rapid economic growth transformed certain countries and areas in East and South-East Asia into destinations for migrant labour. Thus Japan, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan Province of China were reported to be hosting sizeable numbers of largely undocumented migrants.

51. In Asia, the migration policies of receiving countries generally had three goals: to limit migration, eliminate illegal migration and reinforce migration regulations meant to ensure the quality of migrant workers. Countries of origin, on the other hand, aimed at increasing the number of migrant workers abroad, protecting the rights of migrant workers and regulating migration so as to prevent the exploitation of migrants by recruiting agents. An important concern of countries of origin was to protect the increasing number of women who engaged in temporary worker migration, mostly as domestic servants.

52. In 1989, Asia had hosted more than 7 million refugees, a majority of whom had originated in Afghanistan. The second largest refugee population in Asia

consisted of the more than 2 million Palestinian refugees under the protection of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). In contrast, during the period 1975-1988 an estimated 1.5 million Indo-Chinese from South-East Asia had been resettled outside the region, particularly in the United States.

53. The presentation of the paper entitled "Migration between developing countries in the African and Latin American regions and its likely future" highlighted the limited availability and poor quality of migration data in sub-Saharan Africa. On the basis of data on the foreign-born gathered by censuses, it was estimated that during the late 1970s, about 8 per cent of sub-Saharan Africa's population (or 35 million people) had consisted of persons born outside the country in which they had been enumerated. In addition, UNHCR statistics showed that, in 1991, there had been over 5 million refugees in the region.

54. Using similar data for Latin America, it was estimated that in about 1980 less than 2 per cent of the region's population had been foreign-born, although only 41 per cent of the foreign-born had originated in the region. In contrast to migration in the African region, a country outside the region, namely the United States of America, was the major destination of Latin American migrants, most of whom originated in Mexico.

55. Both growing economic differentials and political instability had contributed to the increase of intraregional flows, political instability being more likely to continue fuelling migration in sub-Saharan Africa than in Latin America. But to the extent that development accelerated more in certain countries than others, especially in Latin America, it was likely to induce further migration. Most intraregional migration in Africa and Latin America had occurred at the margin of government policies. That situation was not expected to change, since African and Latin American Governments were thought to be less likely than those of other world regions to intervene in controlling or impeding migration. Indeed, few had explicit policies regarding international migration, and Latin American countries, in particular, considered their immigration levels to be too low and wished to increase them. As in the case of intra-Asian migration, experts expected that migration within Africa or Latin America would increase as the opportunities to migrate to developed countries became increasingly restricted.

56. The discussion stressed the significance of migration flows between developing countries and the variety characterizing such movements. The paucity of data regarding migration to developing countries was considered a serious drawback, particularly because important changes in trends were likely to go undetected for long periods, if at all. Mention was made, for instance, of countries in Latin America, such as Argentina or Venezuela, which seemed to have ceased being attraction poles for migrants during the 1980s. It was also suggested that the scale of temporary international migration was growing in the region. There was, however, little solid evidence to validate those claims.

57. The evolution of international migration in Asia was considered an important example of the effects of development. Thus, labour migration from the Republic of Korea had abated as development had proceeded. The same thing was probably happening in Malaysia and the question was raised whether it would happen in more populated countries, such as India or Pakistan. In addition,

important economic interactions likely to fuel both migration and development were taking hold of various sets of countries.

58. In Western Asia, the oil-producing countries continued to demand foreign labour, although in some countries demand had shifted from blue-collar to service-sector workers. The impact of migration on the development prospects of both the oil-producing countries and the countries of origin of the migrant workers was likely to vary from case to case, particularly because of competition between the latter. According to some participants, the prospects for effective cooperation between sending countries to protect the rights of their expatriate workers did not seem promising.

59. There was considerable variation in the policy responses to migration of developing countries. For instance, among receiving countries, those in Western Asia and Singapore controlled international migration strictly, whereas most countries in Africa or Latin America had fairly lax migration controls. Among countries of origin, a variety of policies and strategies had been used to foster worker migration, prevent the migration of those with needed skills or facilitate the return and reintegration of migrant workers. Of these aims the return and reintegration of migrant workers was judged to have the greatest implications for development, particularly when it was prompted by deteriorating circumstances in the receiving countries, such as those brought about by the invasion of Kuwait or by the economic difficulties experienced by Venezuela.

60. With regard to forced migration, the end of the cold war was judged to hold positive prospects for the resolution of long-standing conflicts in Latin America and to reduce the influence of the super-Powers in the region. Such developments would facilitate the return of refugees to their countries of origin and reduce the possibilities of future refugee outflows. The prospects for Africa, however, were less promising. States that were artificially sustained by cold war enmities were likely to collapse and produce significant refugee outflows. Such developments would generally stem from both the economic and political disintegration of existing States, often exacerbated by environmental problems (which, however, would rarely be the sole cause of forced migration and, as stated earlier, would not warrant the use of terms such as "environmental refugee").

H. Refugees and asylum-seekers

61. The presentation of the paper entitled "Safeguarding the right to asylum" made the distinction between the right to seek and the right to enjoy asylum. The 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees 2/ had not established an individual's right to seek asylum but rather the right of States to grant asylum. In addition, the Convention had failed to provide adequate protection for victims of war or generalized violence. At the regional level, however, the Organization of African Unity 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa and the 1984 Cartagena Declaration had both widened the definition of refugee to include those categories. 4/

62. The refugee regime that had been established in 1951 had experienced a period of expansion in terms of who it covered until the late 1970s. Although the demand had expanded, so had the institution of asylum. Most of the

expansion had taken place in Africa. In the developed world, refugee flows were largely equated with East-to-West flows or outflows from Communist countries that had been acceptable as part of the cold war. During the 1980s, however, as the number of refugees and asylum-seekers had continued to grow, the expanding demand for asylum had been met with an increasingly restrictive response, particularly from developed countries. Faced with potentially large numbers of persons who could make a reasonable claim for asylum under prevailing international instruments, receiving countries were currently adopting a series of measures to restrict access to asylum. Furthermore, in the cases of Iraq and Yugoslavia, refugee outflows had been prevented by internalizing asylum and keeping would-be refugees in "safe" zones within their own countries.

63. Several policy implications of the current crisis of the asylum regime were identified, including the need to maintain the right to asylum; to consider ways of integrating refugee and immigration policy; to deal with large refugee outflows through the institution of temporary safe haven; to establish regional regimes that would strengthen burden-sharing with respect to the protection and assistance of refugees; to monitor the size of refugee stocks and flows; and to devise new ways of dealing with the underlying causes of refugee flows.

64. The paper entitled "Changing solutions to refugee migrations" focused mostly on Africa to discuss the prospects and challenges faced by those seeking solutions to the growing number of refugees in the continent. It was noted that the situation of refugees in Africa was changing: although in earlier decades most countries of asylum had been fairly generous in admitting and assisting refugees, many countries were becoming less generous. In Khartoum, for instance, refugees were being blamed for falling wages and rising rents. In rural areas, as the number and length of stay of refugees increased, their competition with the local population grew, giving rise to antagonism. Given those developments, it was urgent to find innovative ways to foster the settlement of long-term refugees in countries of asylum, particularly by regularizing their status as long-term residents or by facilitating naturalization. Assistance should aim at making refugees self-sufficient and at minimizing their competition with the local population. It was also necessary to channel assistance both to refugees in rural areas and to the increasing number living in urban areas.

65. Repatriation was described as the favourite solution for the plight of refugees. It was recalled that the 1990s had been named the "Decade of Repatriation" by UNHCR, and participants alluded to the many successful repatriation drives that had already taken place. Since resettlement opportunities in third countries of asylum were diminishing and access to asylum in developed countries was becoming increasingly difficult, repatriation was seen as the most viable solution in the future. Nevertheless, repatriation had its drawbacks. Cases in which repatriation had been less than voluntary were cited. In addition, in some countries repatriation had taken place even when the conflicts leading to refugee outflows were still far from over. Other crucial issues regarding repatriation remained to be resolved. UNHCR was usually in charge of aiding in the repatriation but it had no mandate to provide assistance for the long-term reintegration of returning refugees. There was a need to establish when the needs of repatriates became developmental rather than humanitarian and to provide them with the necessary support. In doing so, it was important to balance the needs of repatriates with those of the local population.

66. The discussion reviewed the evolution of the refugee regime in relation to the general immigration policies favoured by developed countries, especially during the cold war period, and noted that one of the best ways of controlling migration was by instituting visas and controlling access to means of transportation etc., at the point of origin. Such methods were increasingly used to restrict access to asylum. In addition, in Europe there was a strong movement favouring the harmonization of asylum policies. The question was whether such harmonization would institute a minimum or a maximum common denominator. The move towards harmonization had some positive aspects, such as that it was likely to introduce greater predictability in the adjudication procedure. To maintain the integrity of the asylum system, it was argued that countries had to adopt consistent treatments for those asylum-seekers who were not granted refugee status. When 80 per cent of those rejected nevertheless stayed in the receiving country, control was lost and there was little incentive to maintain a costly adjudication system.

67. Concern about the increasing number of internally displaced persons in need of protection was raised. International law provided a very weak basis for their protection, since it again involved a conflict between human rights and State rights, specifically, a State's sovereignty. Nevertheless, it was agreed that the plight of the internally displaced deserved more attention from the international community, particularly after internal safe havens had been used to protect would-be refugees, as in the case of Iraqi Kurds.

68. Mention was made of the debate underlying the decision to internalize asylum. When refugees flows arose as part of ethnic cleansing, the international community was reluctant to validate such a strategy by providing external safe havens for the population being expelled. However, by maintaining would-be refugees within their countries or immediate areas of origin, the international community had less incentive to combat the root causes of the conflict. Furthermore, it seemed unethical to put the burden of stopping ethnic cleansing on the plight of expelled persons or those fleeing persecution.

69. The possibility of instituting adequate burden-sharing mechanisms at the regional level was considered. The model established by the Comprehensive Plan of Action regarding Vietnamese refugees was judged to be a successful example of such burden-sharing. In Central America, however, it had proved more difficult to share responsibility and decision-making.

70. Lastly, it was noted that statistical information on refugees was very weak. The estimates provided by Governments were often unrealistic and lacked a scientifically acceptable basis. Although it was recognized that accurate statistical accounting was difficult when refugee flows occurred rapidly and involved large numbers of people, better methods had to be devised to gather refugee statistics, particularly regarding long-standing refugee populations. Better statistics on repatriation were also urgently needed. It was important to sensitize those involved in refugee assistance about the importance of statistics and to enlist their cooperation.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Population distribution and internal migration

The World Population Plan of Action, adopted in 1974, 5/ and the recommendations on its further implementation, adopted in 1984, 6/ underscored the need to integrate population distribution policies into overall development planning with the aim of promoting a more equitable regional development. Among the strategies proposed were the use of incentives to reduce undesired migration; the reduction of rural-urban inequalities; the avoidance of "urban biases" stemming from economic or social policies that favour urban areas; the adoption of rural development programmes aimed at increasing rural production, efficiency and incomes; and the provision of assistance to migrant women. Many of the Plan's recommendations and those made for its further implementation remain valid, but new developments and a better understanding of the linkages between migration and development had indicated additional avenues for action.

Population mobility provides an opportunity to improve the life chances of a wide section of the world population. Improvements in transportation and communications, the increasing mobility of capital, the speed of transactions and widening social networks are all contributing to an increase in permanent and non-permanent migration. It is now recognized that such flows are rational responses on the part of individuals and families to interregional differences in opportunities and to the need to ensure and widen the sources of family support. Moreover, an increasing number of persons are compelled to migrate in order to ensure their very survival.

Recognizing that the free movement of people and the process of urbanization are essential elements of a productive economy, the priority is not to transform population distribution and population mobility patterns radically. Rather, it is to facilitate trends that result in improved life chances for a wide spectrum of the population and to meet the needs of people and enterprises in the locations where they establish themselves. However, it is recognized that in many parts of the world rapid urbanization and the development of very large cities present enormous challenges to Governments in terms of providing urban management and services without neglecting the important needs of rural populations. The recommendations that follow outline strategies to address these issues.

Recommendation 1

Population distribution policies should be an integral part of development policies. In trying to achieve a better spatial distribution of production, employment and population, Governments should adopt multi-pronged strategies, such as encouraging the growth of small- and medium-sized urban centres and promoting the sustainable development of rural areas, while at the same time improving employment and living conditions in large urban centres. In so doing, principles of good governance with respect to accountability and responsiveness should be adhered to.

Recommendation 2

All government policies and expenditures have some influence on the spatial distribution of population and on migration flows, with many of the strongest

influences deriving not from specific urban and regional policies or spatial planning but from macroeconomic and pricing policies, sectoral priorities, infrastructure investment and the distribution of power and resources between central, provincial and local Governments. Governments should evaluate the extent to which both their spatial policies and the spatial impacts of non-spatial policies contribute to their social and economic goals.

Recommendation 3

With regard to urban areas, the main priority must be to increase the capacity and competence of city and municipal authorities to manage urban development; to respond to the needs of their citizens, especially the poor, for basic infrastructure and services; and to provide poor groups with alternatives to living in areas vulnerable to natural and technological disasters. To finance such infrastructure and services, Governments should consider instituting equitable cost-recovery schemes and increasing revenues by broadening the tax base.

Recommendation 4

In order to increase administrative efficiency and improve services, Governments should decentralize expenditure responsibility and the right to raise revenue to regional, district and municipal authorities. Partnerships for rural and urban development should be fostered between residents, community-based organizations, local authorities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

Recommendation 5

Governments should make efforts to develop economic and institutional links between urban centres and their surrounding rural areas by, among other things, improving infrastructure (roads, electricity, water supply and telecommunications); expanding education and health services; and providing technical assistance for the marketing and commercialization of rural products.

Recommendation 6

In order to help create alternatives to out-migration from rural areas, Governments should not only enhance rural productivity and improve rural infrastructure and social services but should also facilitate the establishment of credit and production cooperatives and other grass-roots organizations that give people control over resources and improve their welfare. Governments should recognize and safeguard traditional rights over common lands and water resources. In addition, Governments and the private sector should collaborate in promoting vocational training and off-farm employment opportunities in rural areas, ensuring equal access for men and women.

Recommendation 7

Given that a substantial number of migrants engage in economic activities within the informal sector of the economy, efforts should be made to improve the income-earning capacities of those migrants by facilitating their access to such services as credit; vocational training; a place to ply their trade;

transportation; and health services, including family planning. It is important to ensure that women and men have equal access to such services.

Recommendation 8

Governments and non-governmental organizations should encourage and support group mobilization and organization by and for persons affected by migration, such as women left behind, domestic servants, workers in the informal sector and urban squatters. Organizations formed in this way can foster community participation in development and self-help programmes; mobilize savings and credit; organize for production; provide counselling and other social protection and legal services; and identify problems and make them known to decision makers.

Recommendation 9

Given that in many countries high population growth in rural areas is a result of natural increase, which also makes major contributions to the growth of urban populations, Governments wishing to reduce urban growth should implement population policies and programmes that ensure adequate access to health services and family planning.

Recommendation 10

Given the increase in migration triggered by environmental degradation, natural disasters and armed conflict, there is a need to address the underlying causes of such phenomena, as well as to develop mechanisms to protect and aid victims, whether or not they are in their own country. International and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and Governments are urged to cooperate in addressing such causes and in developing such mechanisms.

B. International migration

The World Population Plan of Action and the recommendations for its further implementation established that international migration policies must respect the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 7/ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. 8/ In addition, the Plan called for Governments of receiving countries to grant documented migrant workers in a regular situation and accompanying members of their families equal treatment to that accorded to their own nationals in terms of working conditions, social security, participation in trade unions and access to health, education and other social services.

With respect to undocumented migrants (defined as persons who have not fulfilled the legal requirements of the State in which they find themselves for admission, stay or exercise of economic activity), the Plan emphasized that all measures designed to curb their numbers must respect their basic human rights. It was further suggested that the International Labour Organisation Convention concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers, 1975 (No. 143), part I 9/ be used

to provide guidelines for the formulation of policies aimed at controlling undocumented migration.

In recent years, growing demographic and labour market imbalances, increasing disparities in economic growth and development among countries and regions and major changes in world political and economic systems have contributed to intensify migration pressures. These growing migration pressures in developing countries and in former Eastern-bloc countries have heightened concern among the main receiving countries, prompted, at least in part, by the negative attitudes of their nationals towards migrants. As in the case of internal migration, voluntary international migration is a rational response to interregional economic differences.

The recommendations presented below take account of developments since 1984, including the adoption of the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1/ which established a new set of standards regarding the rights of all migrant workers.

Recommendation 11

In formulating general economic, trade and development cooperation policies, Governments of both sending and receiving countries should take account of the possible effects of such policies on international migration flows. Where trade barriers contribute to growing migration pressures in developing countries, Governments of developed countries are urged to remove them, as well as to promote investment in countries of origin and to channel development assistance to job-creating projects.

Recommendation 12

Governments of countries of origin are urged to recognize and act upon their common interests by cooperating with one another in their negotiations with labour-importing countries to adopt standardized work contracts, establish adequate working conditions and social protection measures for their migrant workers, and control illegal recruitment agents. Governments of countries of origin should appoint labour attachés in receiving countries to ensure that work contracts are honoured and to look after the welfare of their migrant workers. Advocacy organizations should also have a recognized role in protecting migrant workers' rights.

Recommendation 13

Governments of countries of origin wishing to foster the inflow of remittances and their productive use for development should adopt sound exchange-rate, monetary and economic policies, facilitate the provision of banking facilities that enable the safe and timely transfer of migrants' funds and promote the conditions necessary to increase domestic savings and channel them into productive investment.

Recommendation 14

Governments of receiving countries should protect the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families by conforming to the guidelines

established by the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and other relevant international instruments. It is particularly important that Governments of receiving countries ensure that all migrant workers, irrespective of whether their status is regular or irregular, be protected from being exploited by unscrupulous intermediaries, agents or employers.

Recommendation 15

Taking account of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women 10/ and of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 11/ Governments of sending and receiving countries are encouraged to review and, where necessary, amend their international migration legislation and regulations so as to avoid discriminatory practices against female migrants. In addition, Governments are urged to take appropriate steps to protect the rights and safety of migrant women facing specific problems, such as those in domestic service, those engaging in out-work, those who are victims of trafficking and involuntary prostitution and any others in potentially exploitable circumstances.

Recommendation 16

As previously recommended in the World Population Plan of Action, Governments of receiving countries that have not already done so are urged to consider adopting measures to promote the normalization of the family life of documented migrants in the receiving country through family reunion. Demographic and other considerations should not prevent Governments in the receiving country from taking such measures.

Recommendation 17

Governments of receiving countries are urged to promote good community relations between migrants and the rest of society and to take measures to combat all forms of racism and xenophobia by, for instance, adopting legislation against racism, establishing and supporting special agencies to combat racism and xenophobia, taking appropriate educational measures and using the mass media.

Recommendation 18

Governments should guarantee equal economic and social rights to long-term foreign residents and facilitate their naturalization.

Recommendation 19

Governments of countries within regions wherein rights exist of free movement of their respective citizens should extend these rights to their long-term foreign residents from third countries.

Recommendation 20

Governments should provide information to potential migrants on the legal conditions for entry, stay and employment in receiving countries.

Recommendation 21

Governments of receiving countries should increase their efforts to enhance the integration of the children of migrants (second-generation migrants) by providing them with educational and training opportunities equal to those of nationals, allowing them to exercise an economic activity and facilitating the naturalization of those who have been raised in the receiving country.

Recommendation 22

Governments of both countries of origin and countries of destination are urged to promote and support migrant associations that provide information and social services and enable migrants and returning migrants, especially female migrants in vulnerable situations, to help themselves.

Recommendation 23

Governments of receiving countries should consider adopting effective sanctions against those who organize illegal migration as well as against those who knowingly employ undocumented migrants. Where the activities of agents or other intermediaries in the migration process are legal, Governments should introduce regulations to prevent abuses.

C. Refugees

The World Population Plan of Action and the recommendations for its further implementation emphasized the need to find durable solutions to the problems related to refugees and refugee movements, especially in terms of voluntary repatriation or resettlement in third countries. When neither of the two was possible, the Plan advocated the provision of assistance to first asylum countries to help them meet the needs of refugees. It also called for Governments to accede to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees 2/ and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. 12/

The world refugee population continues to increase and, while there are prospects for durable solutions through voluntary repatriation, the growing number of persons seeking asylum is straining the asylum system. The recommendations that follow emphasize the need to preserve international protection principles, particularly the right to asylum and the need to adopt appropriate strategies relating to returnee programmes and the assistance of vulnerable groups.

Recommendation 24

Governments, the international community and non-governmental organizations are urged to address the underlying causes of refugee movements and to take appropriate measures regarding conflict resolution; promotion of peace; respect for human rights, including those of minorities; poverty alleviation; democratization; good governance; and the prevention of environmental degradation. Governments should refrain from policies or practices that lead to forced migration or population movements of an involuntary nature.

Recommendation 25

Governments are urged to continue facilitating and supporting international protection and assistance activities on behalf of refugees and to promote the search for durable solutions to their plight.

Recommendation 26

Governments are encouraged to strengthen regional and international mechanisms that enhance their capacity to share responsibility in an equitable fashion for the protection and assistance needs of refugees.

Recommendation 27

Governments are urged to protect the right to asylum by respecting the principle of "non-refoulement", granting asylum-seekers access to a fair hearing and providing temporary safe haven when appropriate.

Recommendation 28

Governments, international organizations, community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations are urged to contribute to and participate in repatriation programmes that ensure that initial rehabilitation assistance is linked to long-term reconstruction and development plans.

Recommendation 29

Given that many refugee populations in countries of first asylum have been in exile for extended periods, Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations are urged to assist these long-standing refugee populations to achieve self-sufficiency. Governments of first-asylum countries are invited to take steps to regularize the situation of long-standing refugees with little prospect of repatriation by facilitating their naturalization.

Recommendation 30

The international community, through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and appropriate relief organizations, should address the specific needs of refugee women. In particular, Governments of countries of asylum should ensure the right of female refugees to physical safety and facilitate their access to counselling, health services, material assistance, education and economic activity. Governments should ensure that female refugees have resettlement opportunities equal to those of male refugees.

D. Data and research needs regarding population distribution and migration

The World Population Plan of Action and the recommendations for its further implementation recognized that migration and urban statistics was the least developed area of population statistics and recommended that Governments improve it by using their national population censuses, sample surveys and administrative record systems to obtain information on internal migration, urbanization and international migration. However, despite some advances, many

deficiencies still remain. Furthermore, understanding of migration processes has not advanced as much as understanding of fertility and mortality. The recommendations below indicate areas that should be given priority in data gathering and research.

Recommendation 31

The United Nations system and other appropriate organizations should support and promote research on population distribution, internal and international migration and urbanization, aimed at providing a sounder basis for the formulation of environmental, development and population distribution policies.

Recommendation 32

National statistical offices are urged to collect, tabulate, publish and disseminate demographic data by relevant geographical areas on vital events, migration, and population size and characteristics, so as to facilitate a better understanding of population-change processes and their policy implications at local, regional and national levels. The dissemination of detailed census data coded for micro-regions in machine-readable form should be given priority. The United Nations is urged to foster these activities.

Recommendation 33

Recognizing the major changes which have occurred in the structure and functioning of urban systems, the United Nations and national statistical offices are urged to review the existing standard definitions and classifications of rural and urban populations.

Recommendation 34

The United Nations and appropriate national and international agencies are invited to review the adequacy of existing definitions and classifications of international migration and should also address the problems of incorporating these into efficient data-collection systems. The development of methods allowing the estimation of undocumented migration and, where relevant, statistics on remittances, should also be supported. Efforts should be made to conduct in-depth migration surveys in countries hosting sizeable migrant populations. Governments are urged to produce and disseminate statistics on international migrants, classified by place of birth, country of citizenship, occupation, sex and age.

Recommendation 35

Given the deficiencies in refugee statistics and their relevance for planning refugee assistance and for understanding the consequences of refugee movements, measures to improve them should be accorded priority. Governments of countries of asylum as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations dealing with refugees are urged to cooperate with the United Nations in devising and implementing procedures to register and monitor refugee populations.

Recommendation 36

Given the lack of systematic data on displaced persons, Governments are urged to cooperate with the United Nations and non-governmental organizations to facilitate data collection on displaced populations and their needs.

Recommendation 37

The United Nations should promote the exchange of information on both trends and policies of international migration by creating working groups of national experts, whose task would be to prepare periodic reports on international migration developments in each of their countries, following the Continuous Reporting System on Migration model of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Regional summaries of such reports should be produced and disseminated by the United Nations.

Notes

1/ General Assembly resolution 45/158, annex.

2/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, No. 2545, p. 137.

3/ Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development, Unauthorized Migration: An Economic Development Response (Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 1990).

4/ See Guy Goodwin Gill, "The standard texts", Refugees, No. 46 (October 1987), p. 28.

5/ Report of the United Nations World Population Conference, 1974, Bucharest, 19-30 August 1974 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XIII.3), chap. I.

6/ Report of the International Conference on Population, 1984, Mexico City, 6-14 August 1984 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.XIII.8), chap. I, sect. B.

7/ General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

8/ General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

9/ See International Labour Conventions and Recommendations 1919-1991 (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1992).

10/ General Assembly resolution 2263 (XXII).

11/ General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex.

12/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 606, No. 8791, p. 267.